

## THE MYSTERY SCENE

## 54-Year-Old Superspy

**THE SPY WHO SPOKE PORPOISE.** By Philip Wylie. Doubleday. 312 pages. \$5.95.

—Ringling Wallenda Grove is the spy who speaks porpoise, one of his many accomplishments. Grove also is a former circus acrobat, a magician, and a millionaire—his money made in the manufacture of toys and games. He is the President's personal spy, and the CIA is his target. To put down the CIA (here rechristened Combined Information Authority) and to combat a grave external threat to the country Grove sleuths from his fabulous home in the Hawaiian Islands near Sea Life Park from shanghaied helicopters and beside smoldering volcanos. Wylie's swinging book about his 54-year-old superman is recommended, but would have been better if the construction had been less exhaustingly diffuse.

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**PUPPET ON A CHAIN.** By Alistair MacLean. Doubleday. 281 pages. \$5.95.—Still a fine storyteller, MacLean disappoints with the story he has chosen to tell: A hoked-up spy tale far from the relative realism of, for example, his famous war adventure, "The Guns of Navarone." Opening with a mesmerizing murder in the Amsterdam airport that keeps agent Paul Sherman of the London bureau of Interpol from talking to the man with the key to a narcotics ring, the book slips into bizarre murder and bizarre torture closer to vintage Bond than vintage MacLean. The setting and



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secret of the narcotics ring is pure vintage Hitchcock. Sherman is, incredibly, accompanied by two beauteous female agents — "one with hair as dark as a raven's wing, the other a shining platinum blond." The blonde is more or less a trainee and the brunette has five years' experience but is mighty easy to lure from her post.

**THE YOUNG PREY.** By Hillary Waugh. Doubleday. 206 pages. \$4.95. — Hillary Waugh has written a swift, moving story about the fate of a small-town schoolgirl who comes to New York to take part in a demonstration, and the New York cop who solves the crime that is her fate. The author's gift for characterization is demonstrated impressively by his equally effective portraits of 15-year-old Virginia and tough cop, Frank Sessions, Waugh's new series hero. Issues of the times, including the rights of the accused, provide sermon material, but to the author's credit this remains a story about people, not stereotypes who are launching pads for sermons.